AGRICULTURE

The Dorobo began to cultivate in a small way about 30 years ago (or even a little earlier) and at first they grew only sweets. Though they subsequently came to become cultivators, cultivation was subordinate to the development of cattle-breeding as a primary activity and they have been forced to make agriculture a serious business, for the livestock, implements, and even the seed used in this, they have been indebted to the Kenia.

Land

Those who live in A and B dorobo categories (with whom alone we are concerned here) cultivate small plots in the open land which surrounds the forest. They have no rights of tenure, except the temporary ones acquired, according to Kenia law, if they live there as squatters under the Resident Native Labourers Ordinance. Their plots, reckoned, pl. *indomeek*, range in size from one acre divided into four individual holdings, to half an acre divided into four holdings, to other cases, plots of a quarter to one-fifth of an acre worked by one person. All plots are fenced, and sometimes a living fence is built inside the fenced area; occasionally a man found that elderly Dorobo were allowed by Kenia squatters to have a little piece of their cattle-eaten land to work.

European farmers in the district, with whom the Dorobo land question was discussed, seemed not unwilling to let the Dorobo live considered on their land provided they gave no trouble, but the government authorities thought otherwise, and the position of a Dorobo who did not choose to become a squatter in order to live on what he considered his own land was then precarious.

Cultivation Methods and Crops

Two main crops are grown, eleusine, *pimik*, and maize, *tamukiet*. Millet had not been grown by 1941, though they bought it from the Kenia. Sweet potatoes, *ngbowuik*, are sometimes grown in very limited quantities. Implements are the hoe, *shagwal* here and the panga, or cutlass, both obtained from the Kenia. They have also small axes, *sikibat*, and knives, *rotuet* or *sambabaet*.

The growing of crops is regulated by the dry and wet seasons, *ongkomok*, from October to March, and *mutat*, from April to September. The land is prepared between January and April, and planted in April or May according to the rain. Cultivation follows the Kenia method, with grazing and burning of new land. The seed of eleusine and maize is bought from the Kenia, usually from squatters living nearby. Maize and eleusine are planted together in the same plot, though pumpkins are generally grown separately. Eleusine is reaped in the Kenia manner by cutting off the heads; maize is picked by hand. Granaries of Kenia type are sometimes made, but are seldom needed, as the yields are so small that the loft of a hut generally held all that is not eaten on the field (as is often the case with maize). Cereals are roughly ground on slabs of granite in the Kenia manner.

Food

Food in the old days consisted mainly of meat supplemented by honey, wild vegetables, and grain bought by exchange from the Kenia. The food supply is now based on their own agricultural products, supplemented by milk when they have any, and by certain other foods when they can be got. Meat is still obtained by trapping, though seldom by hunting; it includes the flesh of antelopes, monkeys, pigs, and leopards. Honey is got, as already described, from honey-barrels. Wild food, collected in the forest, includes fruit of the *mwanunat* (vide *infra*), *kwakwanet* (*Grewia* spp.), *ngotuet*, and *ngaret* [illegible]

Intoxicating drink is of two kinds: the Dorobo honey-wine, *kipketuiek* or *kwonik ap lo*, made from honey, and fermented with the long wood-pods of the *mwanga*